

IVdas the brother of Iames lefte behynde him a litell epistle, whiche is of the seuen catholike epistles. And because be taketh witnesse in it out of the boke of Enoch which is Apocryphe that is to say, with|out autoritie, it is reiecte of many: howbeit it hathe ben taken wor|thye autoritie bothe for the aunciencie and vse of it, and is accompted among the holy scriptures.

☞ *THE ARGUMENT VPON* the Epistle of Iude / by D. Erasmus of Roterodame.

HE is vehemently displeased with many wordes agaynst them, that being blynded in their owne couetous appeltites were aduersaries to the Gospell: whiche thyng not|withstanding ought to seme no newe matter, inasmuch as they were predestinate to this ende, and it was spoken of before by the Apostles, that that kynde of men shall lut|kingly crepe among the flocke of Christyanes. Agaynste these sorte, he so armeth them, that they may forecast bothe to restrayne them eyther with blamyng, or saue them by warnyng geuyng. Which thing if they possiblye can not doo, yet they prepare them selues readyly agaynst the comyng of Christ.

Thus endeth the Argument.

☞ *THE PARAPHRASE OF* Erasmus vpon the Epistle of Sainct Iude thapostle.

The texte.

¶ Iudas the seruaunt of Iesus Chryste the brother of Iames. To them which are called and sanctified in God the father, and preserued in Iesu Christe: Mercy vnto you and peace and loue be multiplied. Beloued, when I gaue all diligence to wryte vnto you of the commen saluacyon, it was nedefull for me to write vnto you, to exhorte you that ye should continually laboure in the faith, whiche was once geuen vnto the saynetes. For there are certayn vngodly men craftely crept in, of whiche it was written afore tyme vn|to suche iudgement. They turne the grace of our God vnto wantonues, and deuye God (whiche is the onely Lorde) and oure Lorde Iesus Christe. My mynde is therfore to put you in remembraunce, for as muche as ye once knowe thys, how that the Lorde (af|ter that he had deiyuered the people out of Egypte) destroyed them which afterward belleued nor. The angels also which kepte not theyr first estate, but lefte toeyr owne habitalcion, he hath reserued in euerlastyng chaynes vnder darckenes vnto the iudgement of the greate daye: euen as Sodome and Gomor, and the cyties aboute them (which in lyke maner defiled them selues with fornycacion, and folowed straunge sleshe) are set forthe for an ensample, and suffre the payne of eternall fyer. Lykewise, these beyng disceaues by dreames defyle the flesh, despyse rulars,

and speake euill of them that are in auctorytie. Yet Michael the archangell when he stroue agaynst the deuyll, and disputed about the

body of Moses, burst not geue raylynge sentence, but sayde: the Lorde rebuke the. But these speake euill of those thynges which they knowe not: and what thinges they knowe naturally (as beastes which are without reason) in those thinges they corrupte them selues. Wo bee vnto them, for they haue folowed the waye of Cayn, and are vtterly geuen to the errour of Balam for lukers sake, and perisse in the treason of Chore. These are spottes whiche of youre kyndnes feaste together, without feare, fedyng them selues. Cloudes they are without water, caryed about of wyndes, trees withoute frute at gatherynge tyme, twyse deed, and plucked vp by the rotes. They are the ragynge waues of the sea, fomyng out theyr owne shame. They are wandring stertes, to whome is reserued the myst of darckenes for euer. Enoch the seuenth from Adam prophecyed before of suche, saying: Beholde, the Lorde shall come with thousandes of saynctes, to geue iudgement agaynst all menne, and to rebuke all that are vngodly among them, of all theyr vngodly dedes, whiche they haue vngodly commytted, and of all their cruell speakynges, whiche vngodly sinners haue spoken agaynst hym. These are mutmuters, complainers, walking after theyr owne lustes, whose mouthes speake proud thynges. They haue men in greate teuerence because of auauntage. But ye beloued, remembre the wordes whiche were spokken before of the Apostles of our Lorde Iesus Christ, howe that they tolde you that there should be begylers in the laste tyme, whiche shoulde walke after theyr vngodly lustes. These are makers of sectes, fleshly, hauinge no spirite. But ye dearely beloued, editie your selues in your moste holy faythe, prayenge in the holy ghoste, and kepe your selues in the loue of God, lokynge for the mercy of our Lord Iesus Christ vnto eternall lyfe. And haue compassion of some seperatyng them: and other saue with feare, pullyng them out of the fyre (and haue compassion on the other) and hare the fylthy vesture of the slesh. Vnto hym that is able to kepe you fte from synne, and to presente you faultles before the presence of hys glory with ioie (at the commyng of oure Lorde Iesu Christe,) to God oure sauour, (thorow Iesus Christe our Lorde) which onely is wyse, be glory, maiestie, domynion, and power (before all worldes) nowe and euer. Amen.

Iudas Thadeus the seruaunt of Iesu Christe, the brother of Iames, write this Epistle not to the Iewes onely nor to other newly conuerted, but to all men in commune, whome the tender mercye of God the father hathe of his owne free will sanctified, and hathe also without the helpe of the lawe, made godly of vngodly, and of Idolatours obedient folowers of true religion, whom also the bountelous goodnes of God had preserued in Iesu Christ to this ende, that they shoulde not auaunt with other into the dongeon of euerlasting

damnacion, whom in like manner his free liberall goodnes hathe now called vnto the saluacion of the Gospell. Ther is nothing that I can wishe vnto you more fortunate, than that the goodnes of God would alwayes multiplie in you his giftes, mercie, peace, and charitie: Mercie, that you may absent your selues dayly more and more from the vices of your former olde life: Peace, that you may through godlynes of life nourish the concorde, which you haue with God: and Charitie, that you may through mutuall concorde be all of one mynde, and^{*} eche one bounteously good to other. Dearely beloued, forasmuche as the loue of the Gospell maketh all thinges commune, whether it bee good, that chaunce or whether it be badde, namely in those, matters that pertaine to eternall saluacion: I had so great a defier to write vnto you concerning your saluacion, wherof I am no lesse carefull, than if it were myne owne, forsomuch as brotherly loue pricketh me forward therunto, so as I could not forbear, but I must exhorde you in this Epistle, to stande harde against the false Aposties, for the defence of the sincere faythe, whiche was once deliuered of the holye Apostles. And not onely to labour in this, that you contynue stedfaste in youre faythe, but also to laye youre helping handes vnto other, that they bee not begyled of

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the deceauours. For it is not possible to thinke what a Iewell the treasure of faythe is, and it standeth vs in hande to watche so muche the more warily about^{*} vs, that it be not turned away from vs. For where as we deliuered the Gospelles doctryne vnto you purely and syncerely, euen as we receyued it of Christe, yet there haue a sorte of wiked ones thruste in them selues among in the meane season, vnder pretense of religion, and like woolues haue crept in to the lordes shepfold, setting them selues out in a shewe of godlynes, where in dede they are very enemyes of true godlines. And that thys gayre should not disturbe youre myndes as though it were a newe matter: it was thus decreed long agoe by the secret counsaile of God, thus was it spoken before, that there shoulde ryse men which with theyr wiked myschieuousnes shoulde bothe exercise youre godlynes, and pull condemnacion vpon them selues: they turne the free liberall gifte of our God (wherewith he hathe once frely pardoned vs our synnes, and set vs at free liberty from the sharpenes of the lawe,) in to an occasion of wantones, where as they ought rather to be prouoked through his beneficyall goodnes, bothe to mainteyne and furnyshe the Innocencie frely geuen them, with godly studious endeouours: and being enflamed with the charitie of the Gospel, to do with a good wyll the workes of ryghteousnes more plentifully and more exactly, than Moses lawe had appoynted beefore. But now these men abuse the libertie that is geuen them, vnto filthynes and licentiousnes to synne, and fall of theyr owne accord backe agayne in to theyr olde bonde seruitude, from the which Iesus Christ had redemed the with his owne blood: & denye God, whom they once professed, where as he is the onely lord & maister of all thinges that are in heauen and in

earthe: and denye also our lorde Iesus Christ, which hathe made vs free to
 him selfe with the price of his owne sacred bloude. It auaieth vs nothing to
 bee redemed, onles we contynue stedfaste to thende in those thinges,
 wherunto we are called. I thinke it not necessary, that I should teache you,
 seing you forgette nothing, but I only put you in remem|braunce lest the thing
 that you knowe should slyppe out of mynde. It auailed the Hebrues in tymes
 past nothyng at all, whom (being the figure of the tymes that nowe are) Iesus
 trained out of the hard and miserable bondage of the Elgipcians, through the
 reade sea in to libertie: but euen the same, whome he mer|cifully presetued
 whan they cryed vnto him, he destroyed agayn after a worse sorte, whan they
 distrusted and murmured againste God in the deserte. That, which the
 bondage of Egipte was vnto them, the bondage of synnes was vn|to vs: that
 whiche Pharaon that straight and intolerable lorde was vnto them, the deuil was
 thesame vnto vs, vnder whose tyranny for our owne synnes sake we were
 intangled. They puttyng theyr truste in God, escaped safely through the
 myddes of the waters in to libertye: and we in beleuing the Gospell, haue
 through Baptisme escaped Satans enterest. But like as some of them made not
 spede with all one fayth in to the lande of promise: and vnto them the
 good|nes of God was not onely vnauaylable, but also it turned in to the heape
 of theyr damnacion: euen so vnto vs it auayleth nothyng to haue once set
 aparte our synnes, onles we also growe forward with constaunt myndes in to
 better, and better, and preace to the enheritaunce of the life of heauen.
 Moreouer I would haue you to remembre this also, that it profited not euen
 the aungelles them selues to be so created, that they were companions of the
 Godhead, but assone as they had chaunged that moste fortunate nature
 through theyr owne

wickednes, and persisted not still in the condicion they were in, he threwe
 them downe headlong out of heauen, and hauyng depriued them of the light
 of hea|uen, he damned them in euerlasting darkenes in hel. And there they are
 reserued in cheynes that can not be loced, vnto the day of the last iudgement,
 wherin belyng condemned they shall be commaunded to euerlastyng paynes.
 Nowe Soldome and Gomorre and the residue of the cities therunto adioynyng
 (where as they florished in all pleynteous wealthe of thynges) because they
 abused the li|berall bounteousnes of God vnto riot and outragious luste,
 defilyng them selues with wiked and abominable sortes of filthines, are
 dispatched by the wrath of God, being consumed with fyre from heauen, to
 thintente they myght bee an example vnto other that abuse the benefites of
 Christ vnto the filthynges of life. For they shall not escape the like payne, that
 synne after like sorte. Doe not they sinne after like sorte, which being deluded
 with slouening dreames of false plea|sures, doe not only defile theyr owne
 bodies, but also set naught by theyr rullers and those that are in autorytie:
 and are not afrayed to rayle agaynst them, vnto whō for thautoryties sake they

are in, they ought to do reuerēce? But Milchael tharchangel, whan he had disputaciō with the deuill cōcerning the body of Moses, was yet afrayed opely to speake raylingly to the deuill though he were the moste filthye feende. But where he could not abyde his wicked talkyng, he moderately tempred his curse, after this wyse: The lorde (quod he) rebuke thee. Than if Michael were afrayed to speake cursedly to the deuill▪ howe muche more intolerable a thyng do they, that are not afrayed to curse or speake euyl of men that are set in autoritie and dignitie ouer them? But these mennes peruer|sitie is so great, that where they haue no cause, yet they speake euyl to the and nayle agaynst those thynges that they vnderstande not. On that other parte they are so sore cortupte with ryot and lecherous luste, that in those thynges, wherin brute beastes being quite without reason, lyue well and temperately, as in meate, drynke, and in carnall copulacion, in these matters they behaue them selues moste vnthriftyly. But woo bee vnto them that shall haue the commune rewarde to happen vpon them with those, whose wikednes they folowe the ex|ample of. For they set not Iesus Christ before their eies to take example at, but Cayn that killed his owne brother, vnto whome the myschieuous sore of enuie perswaded fyrst of al to doe murther: and Balaam, who being corrupt with lulcre, went about to curse the people, whō God had blessed: & also Chore, who ha|uyng stered a conspiracie, rose against Moses, and with his sworne conspirours was by an horrible example quyte dispatched. These are they, which where you liue purely and chastely and embrace Gospelike charitie, are as spottes disgra|ceing your company: and where you fast, they geue them selues to ryotous ban|kettinges one with an other. Nether are they restrayned for reuerence or feare of any man from lycencious filthynes but without respecte rashly folowe that thing, that pleaseth theyr own appetites. And yet in these dedes doing, they professe them selues to be teachers of the gospel, and guydes to true vertue. But they are like vnto cloudes, whiche hang a loft, and where as they woulde ap|peare to be disposed to rayne vpon the thyrsty ground, yet they are drye, and haue no water to succour the ground withall, but are rashlye caryed about here awaye and there awaye with theyr owne vayne lustes: beyng lyke vnto trees, whiche in the later ende of corne hatuest be fayre blossomed, and make a lyeng hope of fruite, whan they muste wyther by and by, not onely being all to|gether

vnfrutefull, but also twyes dead, in that they neyther haue life them sel|ues vnto Gospellyke godlynes, and drawe other with them into destruccion: nether is there any more hope of life in the, than trees plucked vp by the rotes, wherin is no hope that they shall spryng agayne: who inasmuche as they are vnquiet and geuen to sectes, they alwayes with some maner of newe vproare dysturbe the quietnes of the congregacyon, being like vnto the outrageous waues of the sea, that rushe them vp on hye, and for all that they doe nothyng, but caste abroade theyr owne rebukes and shames at other as much as in

them lieth: and are like vnto starres, whiche whan they pretende with shewe
 of light to be guydes of the waye, yet inasmuch as ther are raungers about,
 and folow not constauntly that whiche is streighte, but are led away by theyr
 owne affectes now hither now thyther, they carye those that bee symple and
 incircum|specte into shipwrake. These maner startes that set out them selues
 with a false feyned light in this world before men, shal not escape the
 iudgement of God, although he doe not nowe presently punysh them, but
 reserueth them to the eter|nall darkenes of hell. These men, albeit they are
 risen vp in our tymes, yet leste you should thinke that some new thyng were
 chaunced vnto you, Enoch, which was the seuenth from Adam, prophecied of
 them long agoe, and of their tor|mentes which they must in tyme commyng
 suffre. For he speaketh on this wise: Beholde the lorde commeth with an
 innumerable multitude of his saynctes, to practice iudgement agaynste all, and
 to reprove all those that are wiked, of all theyr dedes whiche they haue
 wikedly doone, and of all thinges that they haue stubbernely and fearcely
 spoken agaynst him: not only those that are naughty synfull lyuers, but also
 the wiked and contumelious persones agaynste God. For in dede they, seing
 they measure y^e felicitie of this life by the pleasure of the body, beare
 impaciently, if they fortune to haue affliction or discommoditie, nelther are
 they afrayed to murmure agaynste God in theyr querilinges, that he made
 manne after suche sorte, that he should be but of shorte life, that he should be
 endaungered to diseases, wishing this life to be moste exceedingly long, and
 out of daungier of displeasures, because they haue no truste of the lyfe to
 come. And yet where they can perceauie these so filthye and so vile matters in
 theyr myndes, yet theyr mouth boasteth of certayn greate high matters, and
 profes|seth a certayn wonderfull learned loue of wisdom, where as they not
 onely serue voluptuousnes most vilest that may be, but also handmaking of
 gaynes, whiche thinge dooeth moste princip^{lly} defile the doctrine of Christe.
 For they speake not those thinges that the trueth of the Gospel teacheth, but
 the thinges that are pleasaunt and acceptable to them, whom they hope to get
 any vaun|tage by. Agaynst the poore they are tyrannes, but towards the ryche
 they are very clawbackes. The malice of these men shall the lesse encombre
 you (dear|ly beloued) if ye remembre, that it was tolde before hande in tymes
 paste of the other of the Apostles of our lord Iesu Christe, namely of Paule and
 Pe|ter. For they tolde vs, that in the later tymes there shoulde rise vp mockers,
 that shoulde defyle the most pure doctrine of Christe with theyr wiked
 gredy|nes, not lyuing after the rule of the Gospel, but after theyr owne wiked
 and abominable affectes. And them a manne maye knowe by thys marke.
 Wher|as other that lyue after the spirite of Christe, and hauyng contemned
 earthy thinges set theyr studie vpon heauenly thynges, agree in one quiet
 concorde, these stiere vp dissencions, because they bee worldelinges, and
 geuyng them

selues in to the seruice of worldly affectes, and voyde of the spirite, they hunt after voluptuous pleasures, seke to reigne aloft, and scrape after lucre. And those that set theyr myndes vpon these matters, are not fitte for Christen con|corde. For they had rather disturbe the tranquillitie of the flocke, than to bee brought in to ordre. But as for you, deare brethren, that are spirituall, see you geue diligence, that you maye be more and more, as lyuing stones, heaped to|gether in to the buylding of God, cleauing fast to the sure foundation of your moste holy sacred faithe. Once you were perswaded, that the godly shoulde not want theyr rewardes, how sore so euer they are afflycted here in this life, require not rewarde therfore in this worlde: and the wiked should not faile of theyr delserued tormentes, couet not to reuenge your selues. And therfore make earnest cry•ng for the helpe of God continually with pure and spirituall prayers, and preserue you euery one other with mutuall concorde, and mutuall charitie. For God heareth none but those that be of one harte. Nether put you any distrust, if you be turmoyled sondry wayes in this worlde for Christes sake▪ but loke for the mercie of God to be exhibited not in this life, but in the lyfe that neuer shall ende. In the meane season hauyng consideracion of the persones, geue you dili|gence, to saue al men, some gently and frendely in calling them agayn vnto bet|ter purpose, and the other saue with feare, as if you caught them out of the fire: and hate not y• mē, but this carcas defiled with yearthy affectes, wherwith mans mynde is burthened and defiled, as it were a cote soyled in filthe. And it is con|uenient to amende other mens faultes so much the more gentlie, in that no man being conuersaunt in this sely body can chose but bee vncleane. For that is not in the power of man leste any manne should boastingly challenge prayse to him selfe, but all glorye, might, empire and power bee onely vnto God our sauour, through Iesus Christ our lord, not onely in this world, but before all worldes and in all ages to come for euer & euer. For in dede there is none but god alone that is hable to geue thys vnto those that labour for it, that although being en|uironed with the sely frayle body, the world calleth you on euery side away frō the purpose of godlynes, yet you kepe your selues Innocent still to the ende, & that not onely mē can fynd nothing in your maners, to fynde faulte at, but also that you are ordayned such in the sight of Goddes Maiestie, that he is dis|pleased with nothyng in you, whiche seeth the moste inwarde passages of your myndes. And whan that shall come to passe, you shall reioyce and be glad in the commyng of our lorde Iesu Christ, whan o|ther shall make heauy cheare, whiche seme in the meane space to lyue swetly. And that thys maye so be, prayer ought to bee made with all earnest desyres.

Thus endeth the Paraphrase vpon Iude.